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Threat by Tafoya figure claimed

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FORT COLLINS — A Canadian businessman whose car allegedly was firebombed by former Green Beret Eugene Tafoya has told investigators that he was threatened by Tafoya's reputed associate — Edward P. Wilson — two months before the car was demolished.

Robert A. Manina also told investigators that he was afraid to testify at Tafoya's trial here because Wilson might seek revenge.

That information was contained in court records filed Thursday during jury selection in Tafoya's trial. Tafoya is charged with the attempted murder in 1980 of Libyan dissident Faisal Zagallai.

Authorities suspect both the Canadian bombing and the Zagallai shooting could have been ordered by Wilson.

Wilson — a former CIA operative and indicted gunrunner — is accused of training Libyan terrorists. Authorities claim he hired retired Green Berets to help with the training.

Investigators contacted Manina in Ireland after the Rocky Mountain News disclosed the firebombing last month. Manina told investigators about several contacts he had with Wilson before the firebombing.

The association began in 1977 when Wilson "and some Libyan associates" discussed a business deal with him in Canada. Manina then was vice president and general manager of a company supplying Libya with \$10 million in sophisticated surveillance equipment.

Manina said the business deals he talked

about with Wilson began to go sour and that Wilson said he was unhappy with Manina. The two began exchanging trans-Atlantic messages about the deals. In the final message, Wilson allegedly told Manina: "I wish you luck on your health." Manina took the comment as a threat.

Two months later — on May 26, 1979 — Manina's Jaguar was firebombed on a street in front of his home in Kitchener, Ontario.

Investigators first connected Tafoya with the bombing after he was arrested last April. A cassette found during the search of his Ford Bronco contained a recording of a telephone conversation a man prosecutors claim is Tafoya had about a firebombing on that date in Kitchener.

The man identified as Tafoya was talking to a man identified by authorities as James Clinton Dean about the bombing. Dean also had worked for Wilson, authorities said.

Colorado officials are attempting to subpoena Dean to appear at Tafoya's trial here.

Tafoya, a decorated war hero, told reporters several weeks ago that his work for Wilson was a cover for his real job with the CIA.

He said the CIA ordered him to go to Fort Collins to "rough up" Zagallai, not to shoot him. During the altercation, Tafoya went for a gun and was forced to shoot in self defense, Tafoya said.

The CIA denies Tafoya ever was employed by the agency.

Jury selection, which began Thursday, is expected to take several days.